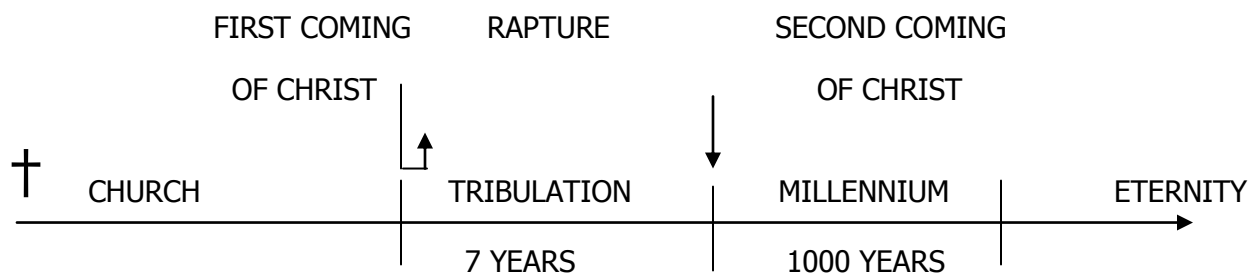


“The Rapture of the Church”
Matthew 24

“But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people....while evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13

THE RAPTURE AND SECOND COMING



Two parts to the coming of Jesus:

1. Rapture – The rapture is that future event when Jesus Christ will descend from heaven and, in a moment of time, resurrect the bodies of departed believers, transform the bodies of living believers immediately into His glorious presence, and then escort them to heaven to live with him forever.

“Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Paul is speaking of the return, the resurrection, the rapture and the reunion.

2. Second coming – This event will see the return of Jesus in glory and power to establish His kingdom upon the earth.

Principle: The rapture is where Jesus comes for his church – the second coming is where Jesus comes with his church.

Three signs of the end times from Matthew 24:

1. False things
2. Bad things

“But you, Daniel roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge.” Daniel 12:4

3. Positive things

Three facts about the second coming:

1. We can know the general time but not the precise moment.
2. Jesus will return at a time when the world is completely unprepared.
3. We are called to be ready, live pure lives and ask Jesus to save us.

“Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.” 1 John 3:2, 3